

Disinformation and misinformation, the parallel pandemia

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Abstract Id: 3

Submitted: 29/08/2020

Event: PIconf2020 - Online Education without Social Distance: Challenges for Internationalisation and Culture of Peace

Topic: Sustainable development

Keywords: information, disinformation, infodemic, misinformation, social media, public health

As Sars-2 Covid-19 global pandemic continues, many countries are emerging from confinement, and as a result people are focusing on how to keep safe and healthy and prevent a “second wave”. A key aspect of this effort is ensuring the accurate and timely delivery of health related information.

This perfect storm of a global pandemic hitting a world with global connectivity may be unprecedented, we utilize our social networks to exchange information as we try to make sense of what is going on around us.

Crisis contexts result in a limited ability to clarify facts or check sources. Unfortunately, misinformation during a public health crisis can prevent the adoption and use of evidence-based preventive measures and treatments and consequently worsen an epidemic (Tan et al. 2015).

When public health officials are seen as less credible sources, people tend to turn to informal sources to find health information (Jan and Baek 2019). The spread of medical misinformation has become a particularly salient problem online - both within social media platforms themselves and on the diverse websites that feed social media discourse.

Collaborative efforts between platforms and public health authorities are requested. People need digital and literacy skills to navigate and make sense of what they see online.